

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 2710
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL ISFAHAN NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHIRAZ NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY SANA

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 JIDDA 5209

ISLAMABAD FOR NEWSOM

ISFAHAN/SHIRAZ FOR WEST

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (NEWSOM, DAVID D)
SUBJ: MOOD IN SAUDI ARABIA

1. DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS INFORMED POL COUNSELOR NIGHT OF JULY 14 THAT SAG WELCOMED VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM AND THAT SAG WANTS TO DISCUSS YEMEN, AFRICA, AND AFGHANISTAN. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO LET YOU HAVE OUR VIEWS ON CURRENT POLITICAL MOOD IN SAUDI ARABIA BEFORE YOU ARRIVE. THE DOMINANT ISSUE IS THE SOVIET MENACE, AND THE FOCUS IS THE TWO YEMENS.

2. SAUDI FOREIGN POLICY BEGINS WITH OIL. SAUDIS ARE BOTH DELIGHTED AND SCARED BY FACT THAT THEY ARE SITTING ON
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LARGEST POOL OF OIL IN WORLD. ON THE ONE HAND, THEY ARE PLEASED BY PROSPERITY IT BRINGS TO COUNTRY AND THE PROMISE IT HOLDS FOR FUTURE. THEY ALSO SEE IT AS MAGNIFICENT AND AWESOME OPPORTUNITY GOD HAS BESTOWED ON THEM TO HELP OTHERS, ESPECIALLY THE FAITHFUL, IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT. WHILE MUCH OF THEIR AID GOES TO SURROUNDING COUNTRIES WHO SUPPORT POLITICAL PRINCIPLES CONSONANT

WITH SAUDI PHILOSOPHY, THEY ALSO DISPENSE MONEY TO STATES AND INSTITUTIONS FAR AND NEAR FOR ALL TYPES OF WORTHY PROGRAMS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THEY REALIZE THAT AN ENERGY-HUNGRY WORLD HAS ITS EYE ON SAUDI OIL. THEY BELIEVE THE REPORTS THAT THE USSR WILL RUN SHORT OF OIL BY LAST HALF OF 1980'S AND THEY ASSUME THAT THE USSR IS ALREADY LOOKING FOR A SOURCE OF OIL FOR THAT EVENTUALITY. THEY THINK THAT THERE IS A SOVIET PLAN TO ENCIRCLE THE ARABIAN PENINSULA AND THE GULF SO AS TO GAIN CONTROL OF OIL THERE. MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM ZAKI YAMANI HAS SAID THAT GULF AREA COULD BECOME SCENE OF ARMED STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE SUPER POWERS IN THE 1980'S, WITH THE OIL GOING TO THE STRONGER.

3. SAUDI POLICY HAS THEREFORE CONCENTRATED ON AN EFFORT TO COUNTER THE SOVIET ENCIRCLEMENT PLAN AND EVEN TO ROLL BACK THE SOVIET PRESENCE WHEREVER THEY CAN. DESPITE OCCASIONAL FRUSTRATIONS WITH SADAT, THEY FIND HIM AND HIS MODERATE REGIME MUCH MORE CONGENIAL THAN NASSER AND HIS SOCIALIST REGIME, AND COSTLY THOUGH IT BE, THEY GIVE SADAT GREAT DEAL OF ECONOMIC SUPPORT. IT IS IN THIS CONTEXT THAT SAUDIS WERE SO ALARMED INITIALLY BY THE SADAT INITIATIVE. THEY WERE CONVINCED THAT IT WOULD BE A FAILURE AND THEY WERE AFRAID THAT HE AND HIS REGIME WOULD BE SWEEPED AWAY BY A TIDE OF HOSTILE AND RADICAL REACTION, WITH THE RESULT THAT SAUDI ARABIA WOULD ONCE AGAIN FIND
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A LEFT-LEANING, HOSTILE REGIME ON ITS NORTHWESTERN FLANK. SIMILARLY, THEY WERE PLEASED WITH NUMAYRI'S DECISION TO TURN AWAY FROM THE USSR, AND THEY FURNISH HIM AID TO HELP STRENGTHEN HIS RESOLVE. THEY FURNISH LARGE AMOUNTS OF AID TO YAR WITH A VIEW TO PROVIDING AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE USSR. THEY FINANCE DJIBOUTI. THEY PROVIDE JORDAN WITH ASSISTANCE. THEY HAVE TOLD US ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS THAT, WHILE THEY DISLIKE THE LEFT-LEANING POSTURE OF IRAQ, THEY FEEL THAT IT IS THEIR DUTY TO STAND BY IRAQ AND POINT OUT DANGER OF CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH SOVIETS. WHEN IRAQ SEES THE ERROR OF ITS WAYS, THEY WILL BE THERE TO HELP IT FIND ITS WAY BACK TO THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

4. THE SAUDIS REGARDED SIAD BARRE'S EXPULSION OF THE RUSSIANS FROM SOMALIA AS ONE OF THE GREAT SUCCESSES OF THEIR POLICY. THEY VIEWED THIS AS A FIRST STEP TOWARD EVENTUAL ELIMINATION OF THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA. THEY SAW BARRE'S ADVENTURE IN THE OGADEN AND THE ERITREAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT AS WAYS OF STIRRING UP TROUBLE FOR THE MENGISTU REGIME IN ETHIOPIA, AND THEY THOUGHT THAT WITH CONTINUAL PRESSURE ON MENGISTU,

HE MIGHT ULTIMATELY FALL FROM POWER AND BE REPLACED BY
A MODERATE GOVERNMENT. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY WERE DEEPLY
DISAPPOINTED THAT USG WAS NOT RESPONSIVE TO THEIR CONSTANT
APPEALS OVER MONTHS PAST FOR AID TO SOMALIA. THEY
REPEATEDLY WARNED THAT IF ETHIOPIA DEFEATED SIAD BARRE,
HE MIGHT BE OVERTHROWN BY PRO-SOVIET FORCES. ACCORDING
TO THEIR VERSION OF THE DOMINO THEORY, THE SOVIET WOULD
THEN SEEK TO CONSOLIDATE THEIR PRESENCE IN PDRY. YAR
WOULD THEN FALL AND OMAN WOULD BE NEXT. THE UAE WOULD
BE THE NEXT VICTIM AFTER THAT AND THE SOVIETS AND
CUBANS WOULD THEN BE STANDING AT THE GATES OF THE EASTERN
PROVINCE WITH ALL ITS OIL RESOURCES. THEIR REQUEST TO
BUY F-15'S WAS JUSTIFIED TO US ON THE BASIS OF THE SOVIET
THREAT EMANATING FROM THE HORN OF AFRICA.

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 JIDDA 5209

ISLAMABAD FOR NEWSOM

ISFAHAN/SHIRAZ FOR WEST

5. RECENT EVENTS IN AFGHANISTAN AND IN THE TWO YEMENS HAVE ONLY SERVED TO CONVINCE SAUDIS THAT THEY WERE RIGHT ABOUT SOVIET STRATEGY. THEY SEE A SOVIET PRESENCE NOW BEING CONSOLIDATED ON THEIR VERY BORDERS AND THEY CONSIDER THAT THE SAUDI REGIME ITSELF IS THREATENED. NO OTHER ISSUE, WHETHER IT BE MIDDLE EAST PEACE OR LEBANON, CONCERNS THEM AS MUCH AS THE PROBLEM OF THE SOVIET PRESENCE IN SOUTH YEMEN.

6. THE SAUDIS CAN BE EXPECTED TO TELL YOU THAT:
(A) THE SOVIET MENACE IS REAL. THEIR VERY EXISTENCE OF THE SAUDI REGIME IS AT STAKE.
(B) THE SOVIET GOAL IS TO GET CONTROL OF GULF OIL. IF THEY DO GET CONTROL, THE WAY OF LIFE AS IT NOW EXISTS IN THE UNITED STATES IS THREATENED.

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(C) THE SAUDIS DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE U.S. DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THAT IT IS IN U.S. INTERESTS AS WELL AS THEIRS TO COUNTER SOVIET PRESENCE IN THE AREA. THEY CAN ONLY EXPLAIN IT AS AMERICAN PARALYSIS AS RESULT OF A VIETNAM COMPLEX. THEY WOULD LIKE THE U.S. TO WAKE UP AND RESUME LEADERSHIP ROLE.

(D) THE SAUDIS WOULD LIKE TO PURSUE POLICY OF COOPERATION WITH U.S. IN COUNTERING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA. THEY WILL SUPPLY SOME OF THE FUNDS IF THE U.S. IS REALLY SERIOUS ABOUT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN INCLUDING BOTH SHORT-RANGE AND LONG-RANGE. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BELONGS IN LONG-RANGE PROGRAM. MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING IS NEEDED IN SHORT-RANGE.

(E) FIRST PRIORITY IS YAR. U.S. SHOULD ESTABLISH PRESENCE THERE AND SHOULD LET RUSSIANS AND CUBANS KNOW THAT HOSTILE ACTIONS AGAINST YAR WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. DANIELS

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